



Department of Education and
Early Childhood Development

Human Resources

2012 Intake Guidelines
Special Education Scholarship

A Teacher Quality National
Partnership / DEECD Initiative



SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP 2012 INTAKE GUIDELINES

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Australian Government



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BACKGROUND

An inclusive education experience for all students requires teachers to be equipped with the knowledge to enable them to support all students including those with additional needs.

The Special Education Scholarship contributes to these aims by increasing the supply of qualified special education teachers and strengthening the capacity of the current teaching workforce. The scholarship also contributes to the future workforce capacity objectives outlined in the *Autism State Plan* and recommendations arising from the *What is my future? – A Review of Deaf Education in Victoria*.

The Scholarship:

- provides financial assistance to enable current DEECD teachers to complete an endorsed special education qualification.
- prioritises financial assistance to the Department's priority areas of Autism and Deaf education.

OVERVIEW

Up to 95 scholarships are available to support teachers in Victorian government schools undertake an [endorsed special education course](#) in 2012. 25 scholarships will be allocated for specialist studies in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and a minimum of 20 scholarships allocated for hearing impairment specialist studies.

There is an expectation that applicants will commence studies in 2012 and may have already made application for course entry. Conversely applicants may have already commenced an endorsed special education course and will continue with these studies in 2012. Scholarship offers will be conditional on selection for course entry and enrolment with applicants required to meet university requirements and timelines.

As far as possible, study will be undertaken at times to suit the needs of schools. In some cases, however, release to complete course requirements may be necessary.

The scholarship quantum for teacher recipients will vary and take account of course costs and CRT replacement to assist meet practicum requirements and other occasional absences. The scholarship quantum will be distributed through payment of a grant to the recipient teacher's school and payable each semester the teacher is actively engaged in study. Schools will be responsible for the timely and direct payment of course fees within university timelines and the management of the scholarship grant for teacher replacement.

Continuation of the scholarship grant will be subject to the recipient's satisfactory study progress and continuing effective work performance. Requests continuation of the scholarship in the event of study deferral is subject to Departmental approval.

All applications will be considered with approval conditional on the satisfaction of program eligibility and selection criteria. A scholarship award will be conditional on selection for course entry.

Applications close 25 October 2010. No late applications will be accepted.

ELIGIBILITY

Applications are invited from Victorian government school teachers who currently have a special education role in their school or are interested in gaining additional qualifications to support their move into such a role.

Teachers will generally need to have ongoing tenure, but fixed term teachers especially in specialist schools and settings, will be considered particularly where subject to completion of studies, there will be an ongoing need for the teacher in the school.

In order to provide teachers for specific communities and provide role models for Aboriginal students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers are encouraged to apply for the scholarship and will be accorded priority in the scholarship selection process.

PRINCIPAL ENDORSEMENT

Individual online applications will be referred to the applicant's principal for endorsement. Further selection consideration will require each proposal to be supported by the principal indicating that:

- the performance of the teacher is currently rated as meeting the professional standards of teaching and they have the commitment, skills and aptitude for the studies to be undertaken.
- for fixed term employees - the special education studies to be undertaken will satisfy an ongoing or significant special education need in the school or network.

ENDORSED COURSES

The scholarship will require teachers to undertake studies in a postgraduate award course or a pathway enabling them to gain formal special education qualifications in accordance with the Victorian Institute of Teaching's (VIT) [Specialist Area Guidelines](#). Teaching method study is a formal requirement of these guidelines and is therefore mandated. A teaching practicum will be required for students who successfully complete the theory component.

A number of universities and training providers provide [endorsed special education programs](#). Courses offered generally allow flexibility in terms of timetabling and delivery mode. Other interstate courses that meet VIT special education course and specialist area requirements may be considered where an appropriate course is not offered locally.

Scholarship recipients will be responsible for applying for course entry and meeting all University and Department application timelines and requirements.

PROGRAM

The scholarship quantum for teacher recipients will vary and take account of differing course costs and CRT replacement levels to assist the school meet costs associated with practicum requirements and other occasional absences.

Funding support will be provided to cover academic course fees. Recipients will be liable for course fees for any repeated course components. Course texts, travel or accommodation costs and any other materials are also to be paid for by the teacher.

Teachers will generally need to undertake study on a part-time basis while continuing their normal role within their school. However absence from regular school duties may be necessary to attend examinations, occasional workshops and preparation for class assignments or examinations. A maximum of 10 days CRT funding per recipient would be provided to manage such absences. No additional funding would be provided should a teacher be required to repeat a study element or elect to complete studies over an extended period.

Practicum placement (teaching practice) is required for Special Education studies. The following funding support will be provided where it is demonstrated that replacement arrangements are necessary for the period of the practicum placement:

TEACHER FROM A SPECIAL SCHOOL OR SETTING:

- 30 days practicum can be undertaken at own school. (Not funded by the Department).
- 10-15 days practicum is required to be undertaken in an alternative school setting undertaking disability related tasks. (Funded by the Department).

TEACHER FROM A MAINSTREAM SCHOOL:

- 15 days practicum can be undertaken at own school undertaking disability related tasks. (Not funded by the Department).
- 30 days practicum is required to be undertaken in a special school setting. (A minimum of 20 days is funded by the Department, with full funding subject to budget constraints).

SELECTION

Scholarship recipients will be selected from the pool of eligible applicants based on the best match to the highest areas of need. Department and regional network priorities will be taken into account and include consultation with regions to target priority areas that have been identified in Regional Strategic plans and to ensure all regions are represented.

Priority considerations will be given to:

- those with the potential to qualify in the Department's priority areas of Autism or Deaf education;
- the teacher's performance, commitment to special education, and commitment and aptitude for the studies to be undertaken.
- applicants from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds

Selection consideration may also include an interview for some applicants.

Any resulting scholarship award will be conditional on selection to and enrolment in an endorsed special education course.

AGREEMENT

Teachers selected for the Special Education Scholarship will be required to enter into an agreement accepting the scholarship offer, terms and conditions.

Under the terms of the agreement all scholarship holders will be expected to:

- Provide evidence of course enrolment and commencement;
- Remain enrolled in an endorsed course;
- Provide a progressive summary of results;
- Complete the course within the specified time frame;
- Provide on course completion, an official full academic transcript providing evidence of the satisfaction of all course requirements, the course award and results achieved.

TIMELINE

25 October 2011 Closing date for the submission of online scholarship applications.

Mid November 2011 Scholarship offers made progressively from this time.